

AN  
ADDRESS  
TO THE  
ELECTORS  
OF  
ENGLAND.



LONDON,

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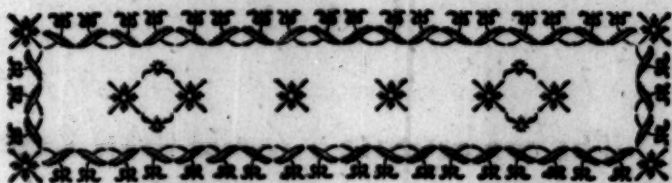
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## ADDRESS, &c.

THE greatest people this world  
T ever saw, and, probably, will  
ever see, gave public thanks  
to their general, who, after he had by  
his own obstinacy lost fourscore thou-  
sand of his fellow citizens at the battle  
of Cannæ, had no other merit than  
collecting the remains of his army, and  
bringing them safe to Rome: this  
dreadful defeat, which came upon the  
back of many others, did not hinder  
this great minded people from thank-  
ing the author of it *for not having de-  
spaired of the commonwealth.*

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The consequence I would draw from this instance in the Roman history, is, that if Terentius Varro, after so fatal a miscarriage, could deserve the thanks of his country for the single virtue of not having despaired of the commonwealth, it must be proportionably criminal to despair of it under any afflicting circumstances, or a more afflicting prospect. Let us not then despair of our country: It is our duty, and to speak in the language of this age, our interest, not to despair of it.

We have lost Minorca it is true :  
Nay we have lost our reputation,  
where we used to triumph, at sea :  
We are almost sinking under a load of  
taxes : The earth, that feeds us ; the  
air, that cheers us ; the fire, that warms  
us, are all taxed ; water is the only  
element which has hitherto escaped the  
sagacity of our ministers ; they have  
respected That as religiously, as the  
pensions



penfions they receive, or give ; but we muft take care not to drink even water out of glafs, or filver : For both thefe have felt the touch of the minifterial wand, and will prefently convey the magic to this harmlefs liquor.

If our taxes are already intollerable, what name fhall we give to them when they encrease upon us? as encrease they muft, if we go on, in making fubfides the bafis of all our treaties with foreign princes, who are fure to violate thofe treaties for greater fubfides; in hiring mercenary troops at an unheard of expence ; in transporting them hither, in order to double that expence ; and to be laughed at in transporting them back again, whenever the fecurity, or the intereft of the princes we hired them of fhall require it.

Thefe are aggravating circumftances no doubt ; and fo are many more, which I forbear to mention, becaufe  
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my design is not to inflame, but to relieve you: Not but I could wish that the commissioners of the customs and excise would order their several clerks to collect and publish a dictionary of taxes, distinguishing the reigns, and years of every prince, who has erected these monuments of his affection for his subjects; *monuments, as Horace says, more lasting than brass, and proof against the bite of showers, the impotence of winds, and the flight of time*: For, of all sublunary things, taxes, I believe, are the most permanent. Such a dictionary would be as edifying as voluminous, while all the untaxed articles might be contained in a hornbook.

But these, and all the other miseries, and miscarriages, which the author of the fourth letter to the people of England has laid before you with all the power of thought and language, are only consequential, not original, calamities. Our wounds lie deeper,  
and

and must be opened, in order to be cured. It is not a change of ministers, but a change of measures, that must eradicate the evil which has long since been preying upon our vitals, and is now come to a crisis.

In all free governments, the two great points upon which the attention of legislators has turned, are the security of domestic liberty against the men in power; and the security of the nation against foreign enemies. The methods of effecting these two points are so obvious, that, in mentioning them, I shall rather put you in mind of your own reflexions, than communicate my thoughts. It is an established principle in philosophy, that the simpler, and the less entangled any system is, the greater chance it has of being the true one: Let not, therefore, the simplicity of the means I have to propose to you, derogate from their value, nor defeat your hopes of their operation: Few  
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they are, indeed, in number, and as effectual, as obvious: They carry with them no innovation in our constitution; but a restitution to the rights, which your ancestors long enjoyed: These are annual parliaments, and a general militia. And these two laws, I am persuaded, would strike the court of Versailles with greater terror, than millions granted every session of parliament, and all the royal navy of Great Britain commanded by parliamentary admirals and captains.

But, of these two points, so essential to your liberty and security, I shall speak in their order; and begin with annual parliaments, your only hope, without which every thing else will be precarious.

That your ancestors enjoyed the glorious privilege of annual parliaments, from the first institution of those assemblies, during many ages; and that  
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this privilege was secured to them, not only by the common law of this realm, but, also, by two acts of parliament passed by Edward the third, as great a prince both in peace and war, as ever swayed the sceptre of this or any other, nation, will not be denied by any man, but by those who have employed more of their time in destroying the constitution of their country, than in studying the history of it. What crime then have your ancestors of a later date, or you yourselves committed to be deprived of the liberty of confirming every year, or rejecting those of your representatives, who have performed, or neglected their duty; a right, as inherent to parliaments, as parliaments are to your constitution?

But, I suppose, your ancestors, who enjoyed this right, paid more every year to the support of the governments they lived under, and were more affectionate to them: This is so far otherwise,

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wife, that there is above fifteen times more money now raised annually from the sweat of your brows, let whatever allowances be made for the difference in the value of money, than was paid by any of them, in any year, towards all the exigencies of the government : and I defy the most determined of your enemies to point out any period in the English history, during which the prince upon the throne, either deserved, or had, a greater share in the affections of his subjects, than his present majesty, during a reign, long indeed in its duration, but short in our wishes.

But, it seems, annual parliaments will produce annual tumults : They will not say annual corruption, but annual riots. So far from it, that annual parliaments will produce neither annual tumults, nor annual riots, but will preserve the nation from septennial corruption, and, what is infinitely worse, septennial perjury. That annual parliaments

liaments will not produce annual riots, let the example of the city of London convince you, where the common council men are chosen annually with as little disturbance, as their parish officers. The pretence of preventing tumults and disorders is a stale argument, and has always been made use of by those, who, sensible that they have deserved the resentment of the people, have no other way of preventing the effects of that resentment, than by preventing them from an opportunity of shewing it.

Dion Cassius (who by the way lived under an absolute prince) in order to prepossess his readers with his own servile notion that the death of the first Cæsar, which he is going to relate, was an impiety, instead of the last effort of expiring liberty, congratulates the Romans upon the loss of their freedom, and says that it was impossible for them to be preserved unless they were united,



and impossible for them to be united, as long as they enjoyed their liberty. This indeed was the way to unite them : And, under the auspices of this blessed union have I seen the gally slaves at Marseilles march along the streets, all linked to one chain, with all the harmony imaginable : They were united certainly, but united in slavery.

Able ministers, who know that all governments depend upon the consent of the governed, will endeavour to gain, not to force, that consent : Consent indeed may be forced for a time, but nothing but the interest of the governed, and the sense of that interest, can render it durable : And various accidents may happen, where the peoples affection, always despised in prosperity, and applied to in distress, may be the only refuge ; and, in the article of danger nothing but the hopes, either of securing the liberty they enjoy, or of regaining



gaining the liberty they have lost, can insure their assistance.

Will any man dare to avow that he pays a greater regard to the affairs of his own family, than to Those of the public? and yet there is not so thoughtless a spendthrift among all the sons of whim, who would trust the management of his estate to a steward irrevocably for seven years. Among all the various traps which art lays for extravagance, this, I dare say, is too discoverable to have been ever attempted.

But you play deeper still; your septennial irrevocable stewards have an unlimited command, not only over your property, but also over your liberty. They may by law, if they should ever think so fitting, tax you ten shillings in the pound; and by the salaries they may hereafter receive out of those taxes, not pay for their own share one shilling in the pound: They may think

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the term of seven years not long enough to complete their own fortunes, and your misery; and, in order to effect the completion of both, they may prolong their term for four years, or for seven years longer; nay they may perpetuate themselves: And, if they should ever do any one, or even all of these things, the law would give a sanction to all.

It is true, that, in any of the last mentioned cases, the elected would stand in your places, and become the electors: No matter; the law, like an indulgent parent, would overlook all these irregularities, and say that what ought not to have been done, is valid when done; and would suppose that, when you chose your representatives for three years, you delegated to them a power of prolonging their term for seven years, or even of perpetuating themselves. These are the fatal consequences of departing from the constitution

tion of your ancestors ; and the only way of preventing these consequences is to return to that constitution.

But, say you, the same thing may happen in annual parliaments ; we must trust our representatives with the same powers ; and these powers annual parliaments may abuse, as well as triennial, or septennial parliaments. The fact I own, but deny the consequence.

That an annual parliament may abuse its power, and prolong its term, must be allowed ; it is a possibility, which the utmost extent of human foresight, such, as dictated your noble plan of government to your ancestors, could not guard against.

But, in order to effect this, let us consider what must happen : In the first place, if you can obtain annual parliaments (and, if you will, you can obtain them) this law will be punctually



ally observed, even in this nation, for some time ; during which, it will from its obvious benefits take such root, that an annual parliament might as soon repeal all your laws, as this, which will presently be looked upon as the support of them all.

Besides, in order to repeal this law, you yourselves must be first bribed to chuse such men, as will be the proper instruments for such dirty work ; and what ministry can bribe you without votes of credit, which an annual parliament will never grant ? secure therefore against being bribed, you will be secure of being virtuous ; and will chuse not such men as will be recommended to you, but such as will recommend themselves. These therefore are the obvious benefits resulting from annual parliaments ; you will preserve your liberty, and the parent of that liberty your virtue ; unbribed, unperjured, courting no man, fearing no man,  
and



and hearkening to no other voice but to that of your own consciences, you will chuse such representatives every year, as you most confide in; and, if you are disappointed in your choice, you will reject them the year after.

And, if once you recover your right to annual parliaments, you have all the reason in the world to expect the blessing will be permanent; because, whatever influence, fair or unfair, the ministers may hereafter have in both houses, and whatever may be their determination in consequence of that influence, your sovereign's consent will be necessary to renew your slavery: And I should as soon suspect king George the Second of consenting to repeal the act of settlement in order to deprive his family of the succession, as of consenting to repeal the act for annual parliaments in order to deprive his subjects of their liberty.

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I proceed now to the militia bill, which is as necessary to secure you against your foreign, as annual parliaments are to secure you against your domestic enemies. This is a point which has been much laboured by all the friends of liberty ; particularly by a person whose learning and great parts, hereditary parts, are as conspicuous, as his zeal for the interest of his country, or as the great fortune and dignity he will certainly deserve, and probably one day enjoy in it : But the bill for a militia, passed by the representatives of the people last sessions, is a greater argument in favor of it, than any private authority how great soever : To which may be added the concurrent petitions from every part of the nation, all echoing to the voice of their representatives (and this is a constitutional echo) which both suggest and justify an endeavour to recommend a measure so advantageous at all times, and so necessary at this, when

when the security of the royal family, and the independence of the nation call aloud for the enacting of it.

The merits of a general militia bill seem principally to turn on this, whether a free people ought to trust the defence of their liberty to foreign, or to national forces. We shall be assisted in this inquiry by examples drawn from history, which, notwithstanding the great genius of the present age abounding in mother-wit, an ounce of which is allowed to be preferable to a pound of learning, will however be acknowledged to be of some little use in the conduct of public affairs.

The greatest nations ancient history presents to our view are the Romans, and the Carthaginians; the former of whom never made use of foreign troops, till the Second Punic war, when, the commonwealth being exhausted of men by their reiterated defeats, the two Sci-



pio's, one the father, and the other the uncle of the first Scipio Africanus, who then commanded in Spain, took 30,000 Celtiberi into their service; and these, being debauched by the Carthaginians, turned against their masters, defeated the Romans, and occasioned the death of both their generals.

The other example will be drawn from the Carthaginians themselves; who, after the First Punic war had been put an end to by a peace with the Romans, saw their country laid waste by the foreign troops they had hired in that war, their country houses set on fire, and at last Carthage itself besieged by them: Great was their distress; greater than could, at that time, have been brought upon them even by the Romans, against whom they had hired these foreign troops: And it was owing to the uncommon abilities of Amilcar, the Carthaginian general, that Carthage did not become a prey to the mutiny of her  
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own mercenaries. The reader will remember that Livy, and Polybius relate both these facts with many circumstances more favourable to my present argument than I have room to insert.

Let us now take a survey of the free states subsisting, at this day in Europe: their number, alas, is reduced to so few, that such a survey is but too easily taken. Despotic princes, artful ministers, and corrupted nations have lessened the number of free states so far, that, besides our own, the Venetians, the Dutch, and the Swiss Cantons, can alone lay claim to that appellation.

It is well known that in the thirteenth century the senate of the former passed a vote by their own authority, without the consent of their constituents, that the then present members, and their posterity, should ever after constitute the senate, exclusively of the rest of their  
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fellow citizens : after this, Gentlemen, you will not wonder that any motion for a national militia must have been thrown out by such a senate ; and that it has been the uniform policy of the senate of Venice to employ foreign troops, and to trust the whole of the Venetian liberty, or what they call so, to the precarious assistance of foreigners, rather than to the natural support of the natives, who, when armed, might be tempted to ask sawcy questions, and to inquire by what authority their equals came to be their masters.

The Dutch call themselves a free people ; but have departed from the *union*, upon which their freedom was founded : By the terms of that union, which, with our assistance, enabled them to shake off the Spanish yoke, the people in every city and town had a right to chuse their own magistrates. This right their magistrates have by fraud

fraud and violence deprived the people of; and these magistrates now every where create one another; just as the corruption of their cheese ingenders maggots. And here again we are not to wonder if the Venetian policy prevails, and fills their armies with foreign troops, who fight for pay alone, without any regard to the liberty of the country they are hired to defend. But the usurpation of the rights of the people does not stop here: For their self chosen magistrates chuse the deputies to the states general, who, consequently, are not the representatives of the people, but of these magistrates. By this refinement of Dutch policy they have transformed their government to a system that wants a name among the writers upon politics: It is neither a monarchy, nor a democracy, nor an aristocracy, but in opposition to the last, *a cacistocracy, a government of the worst men.* From hence follows a general imbezelment of their finances; a decay  
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of all trade, but that which is contraband; and a violation of the most solemn treaties towards a nation that first established, and, within these ten years, preserved their commonwealth, to be branded, during the little time it will last, with the infamy of ingratitude. However, their East India company understands the genius of the natives better than their state, and sends only Dutch soldiers to their settlements in that part of the world, as the best qualified to massacre unarmed Chinese for their money, and defenceless Englishmen for nutmegs.

Turn your eyes now, Gentlemen, from the corruption of the Dutch, to the virtue of the Swiss: They still preserve their liberty, though surrounded with tyrants on every side: And how do they preserve it? By national forces. And now let me put a case, which has often happened; that an alliance of all their powerful neighbours was formed  
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to enslave them; and that in consequence of this threatened invasion, a diet was summoned to consider of the means of defending themselves: And here let me ask any Gentleman, who is acquainted with the genius and policy of this nation, what treatment any member of that diet must expect, who should gravely propose to send for foreign troops to defend the liberties of his country. Are the Swiss more attached to their constitution than Englishmen? are they braver? Both these questions must be answered in the affirmative, by every man who refuses to trust the latter with arms to defend their king and country. The enjoyment of liberty has inspired the Swiss with an affection for their country: discipline and action have made them soldiers: Englishmen most assuredly enjoy their liberty and something more, though not more valuable, licentiousness; and discipline, which they both want and desire, and action, which probably

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they will not want, will soon make them soldiers.

I lay the greater stress on the Swiss nation, because liberty, which has been banished from all other parts of Europe, has taken refuge in their country, and in our own : For which reason, if ours should ever be enslaved by fraud, or force, those among us, who had rather hear the miseries of their fellow citizens at a distance, than be eye witnesses of them, are sure to find a safe and honourable retreat among this people; where many of them, for reasons too well known to be mentioned, have received their education; and then will be verified the observation of Livy upon the destruction of Alba, *crescit interea Roma Albæ ruinis.*

Before I dismiss the consideration of a general militia, you will give me leave to mention one thing which I think



think of importance. Since the French armies were first commanded by Marshal Saxe, they have brought into the field such trains of artillery, as never had been heard of in former wars: By this means, the fate of every battle is decided by ingeneers, not by soldiers. Whether this improvement in the art of war was owing to a distrust of their men, or to a regard for their safety, which is certainly very commendable, there is nothing more sure, than that we ought to imitate them, and be taught by our enemies. I would therefore propose that if you can obtain a militia bill, I mean a general militia bill, which alone can enable you to defend yourselves against false friends, and open enemies, That every parish in England be supplied with a cannon of between 20, or 30 pound ball, with ammunition proportionable; and that, upon every review, these cannon be drawn out, and fired with powder.

By this means, if our enemies should take the advantage of dark nights, or hazy weather, while our naval commanders are engaged in adjusting the prerogatives of some mayor of a corporation, or in some more weighty affairs at the admiralty, or at White's, they may be received with two or three hundred pieces of cannon, their own arms, and eighty or ninety thousand militia, both which will soon be encreased to twice that number. And I am as much convinced as I can be of any mathematical demonstration that the terror of such an armament would not only preserve us from any attack of an enemy, but also give great weight to our ministers in every foreign negotiation; this would enable them to act in a manner suitable to the dignity of the English nation; instead of purchasing allies, they would command them; and instead of meanly soliciting assistance at a monstrous expence, and of being refused

fused by those, upon whom they had the greatest reason to depend, they would let all the nations, with whom they treated, know, that England was secure at home, and in a condition of granting, not of wanting, assistance.

In this respectable light will England appear, if you obtain a general militia bill qualified in the manner I have mentioned. Oppressed though you are with taxes; bullied and traduced as pirates by your enemies, whose loss, not virtue, gives you that appellation; deserted by your friends; and impoverished by an army, large enough to ruin you, but not to defend you, still have you a resource in yourselves; but this resource cannot exert itself without a general militia bill to give, and justify, its vigor; without That, you are chained down a defenceless prey to the first invader.

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And, among other resources, you may be assured that you are in possession of a man more capable of preventing, and alleviating, distresses, than any nation at this time in Europe can boast of; a man of great parts greatly cultivated; one, who, from his conversation with all histories in their own languages, can find nothing new in the conduct of public affairs; in which the interest of his king and country requires that he should be an actor, rather than a spectator; his mind, equally capable of adopting the free principles, and shining thoughts of Athens and Rome, will apply them both to secure, and adorn your liberty; and, if ever he opposed what you thought conducive to it, he could have no other reason for that opposition, than because he did not think the plan extensive enough to secure it: But, if ever these great parts, and great accomplishments should be employed to de-

feat a plan more extensive, and consequently more beneficial, you will all look upon, and treat them both as the imbellishments not of truth, but of deceit, and exerted not to secure liberty, but to render slavery plausible.

Your affairs are now brought to a crisis: If you cannot, or rather will not obtain a general militia act, the devastation of this fertile country, the plundering of your houses, the ravishment of your wives and daughters, and the destruction of the royal family, with which your own safety is intimately blended, will be effected by the power, and, what is worse, the insolence of your enemy.

You will remember, Gentlemen, that in the year 1588, when Philip the second invaded this nation with a fleet of 150 men of war, of an enormous size (for this is the account which all historians give of them) with 19,000 land forces

forces on board, while the prince of Parma, the greatest general of his age was waiting his opportunity at Newport to embark, on board another fleet, 30,000 foot, allowed to be the best disciplined army then in Europe; Queen Elizabeth's ministers never thought of sending for foreign troops to defend this nation from so formidable an attack both by sea and land; but trusted the safety of her person, and the liberty of her people, to the loyalty and courage of that people: and yet no reign had ever been more fertile in plots, levelled, not only against her dignity, but even against her person: However, Burleigh and Walsingham, her great and worthy ministers, thought the security of England ought to depend upon Englishmen alone: And, if the Spaniards had landed, and the prince of Parma had joined them with his veteran army, I have so good an opinion of our ancestors, that I make not the least doubt but they would have given a good account



count of them: My reason is this, I have seen a record of the muster rolls at that very time, containing a very exact account of the militia then raised in every county, city, and corporation in England; and the whole amounted to no less than 192,000 men: And will any man in his senses say that such a number of Englishmen, animated by their attachment to the best of princes, by her presence, and by their love to liberty, would not have repulsed, killed, or taken 50,000 Spaniards, though commanded by the prince of Parma? And what our ancestors would have done, why cannot we do? We are beyond all comparison more united than they were: but we are not as much trusted: Woe be to those who dare to say we do not as much deserve it.

It is computed that the people of England amount to seven or eight millions: This is thought a moderate computation. And if the twentieth person

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(which would be no great grievance, when their all is at stake) were armed and disciplined, and every parish supplied with a cannon, I would ask what nation, or what confederacy of nations, would invade, or even dare to think of invading you? when you are thus secure at home, your powerful fleets might range the wide ocean uncontrolled, and be sure to meet with no other enemies but the winds and the waves.

I am too much transported with the view of seeing my country emerge from her present unfortunate situation, to so great felicity, that I can scarce let myself down to answer a mean objection against this glorious scheme; which is, that all these advantages would indeed flow from the measure proposed; but that a people, taxed as we are, necessarily, or unnecessarily, ought not, in sound policy, to be trusted with arms; and, if these objectors have learning enough they may quote a saying of Homer to support

support their objection, *αὐλος γὰρ ἐφέλκεται ἀνδρὰ σιδηρὸς*, *arms alone tempt a man to violence*. This is an objection that may be whispered, but will never be avowed; and because it will never be avowed, it does not deserve to be answered.

That you will obtain a militia bill next sessions of parliament I make no doubt: The repeated addresses from every part of the nation will I dare say prevail with the ministry, stunned with the disgrace and loss the nation has sustained, and still more so with the national clamors for an inquiry into the causes of that disgrace and loss, to gratify you with something like a militia bill, clogged, and intangled with such clauses and provisions, as will render it inadequate to all national purposes; sufficient indeed to silence you, but not to defend you. Be upon your guard therefore against any captious militia bill, such a one as may be calculated to render all militia bills imprac-



ticable, and ridiculous, and, what is more, even dangerous to your liberties. You have a right to see the bill before it is passed; you have a right to solicit your representatives against any clauses in it which you may dislike: You have petitioned for a militia bill, but you have not petitioned for an ineffectual one, for an impracticable, for a ridiculous, for a dangerous one; but for such a militia bill, as shall secure your king, and country: Such a one therefore you have a right to solicit with modesty, but with firmness; and, if you do this, you are sure to obtain it: For if the concurrent voice of the electors of England cannot obtain a bill which they think necessary for their liberty, and the defence of that liberty, they from that moment cease to be free.

To give our ministers their due, when very lately they saw the nation set against the Jews bill, for which much might be said, they repealed it: And  
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can you doubt your power after this, when nothing can be said against the bill you desire? But I will suppose you now in the possession of an effectual militia act. How long do you imagine you will continue in the possession of it? As long as the danger lasts, and no longer. Nothing can secure this invaluable blessing to you, but annual parliaments; and nothing can secure annual parliaments, but a militia act. Gain them both, my dear countrymen, and you will preserve them both; but if you want either, the other will be precarious.

And now give me leave to congratulate you that your government is already arrived so near to perfection, that nothing but the obtaining these two acts is wanting to complete it.

I doubt not, Gentlemen, but many of you, as well as myself, have read every thing that either ancient, or modern

dern authors have written upon govern-  
 ment: But no authors have canvassed  
 this matter so accurately as the Greeks:  
 For, as Pliny says in speaking of Mar-  
 lin, which, I hear, has been practised  
 in some parts of this nation with great  
 success, *quid enim intentatum illis, what*  
*have they left unattempted?* Among  
 other arts and sciences, which these au-  
 thors, far superior to all others, have  
 treated of, they have given a particular  
 attention to government, which one of  
 their best writers, Aristotle, has called  
 the greatest of sciences, as it provides  
 for the happiness of all mankind: This  
 philosopher, as well as others of his  
 countrymen, has shewn by invincible  
 reasons that monarchy, aristocracy, and  
 democracy, are in themselves imperfect;  
 and that the only perfect form of go-  
 vernment is That, which consists in an  
 union of all three.

This, Gentlemen, is your form  
 of government, which the wisest men  
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this world ever saw preferred to all others, and which you now live under: This is the government which your Saxon ancestors delivered down to you; and This the government which they enjoyed with very little alteration for about thirteen hundred years: Cherish and admire this form of government: admire the wisdom, as you have felt the glorious effects of it: Let it not perish in your hands, but deliver it down to your posterity as perfect as you received it from your ancestors. Restore yourselves to annual parliaments, and a militia, which they enjoyed; and make use of both to the support of the best of kings, and the best of constitutions.

And here I cannot help wondering how your Saxon ancestors came by so perfect a system of government. They are represented by all historians to have been a most ignorant people, when they came hither; and by all our accounts

counts of them they certainly were so : The law, enacted by them after their conversion to Christianity, by which a felon saved his life only by reading, plainly proves their ignorance : And we may reasonably conclude that the countrymen of these adventurers, who came hither, had no more learning than their colony. How came it to pass then, that so ignorant a people should be in possession of so wise a form of government ? If at that period of time they had been traditionally masters of a true system of astronomy, every reasoning man would presently say that in early ages the ancestors of this people had a great deal of astronomical learning, but that by some conquests, and devastations, a thing we know has often happened, their learning was lost, and the tradition preserved : And have we not reason to conclude the same thing, when we find an ignorant people in possession of the truest system of government ?

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I now return, my dear countrymen, from conjectures to certainties: and nothing is more certain than that you are, at this instant, upon a wrong scent. You are all petitioning that an inquiry may be made into the loss of Minorca, and into many other grievances which you have, no doubt, great reason to complain of: But, before I let you know my thoughts upon this subject, I do assure you, upon the word of a Gentleman (and, though I do not set my name to this pamphlet, it may, notwithstanding all the precautions I can take, be known that I am the author of it; in which case if the assurance I now give you is not true, I shall be looked upon as the worst of men) I do assure you then, that I never have received, nor ever expect to receive, any favour from any ministry. I do not think that what I have already said, stands much in need of this apology; but what I have to add, may.

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It is my opinion therefore, Gentlemen, that you are acting like a man, who has received a treacherous wound from a ruffian, and instead of sending for a surgeon to dress his wound, sends for a bully to revenge it.

I am willing to own that you have all the reason in the world to complain of your late loss of Minorca, which is still aggravated by the shameful manner in which it was lost: I am willing to allow that you have long been, and still are, taxed not only unnecessarily, but wantonly; and without having received any benefit from these taxes, but the no defence of your possessions and properties: Nay I am willing to allow every thing that is alledged, not proved, in the fourth letter to the people of England. However, let us suppose all this to be true: Does it therefore become your wisdom to petition for revenge instead of redress? I verily believe the latter will be easier obtained, than

than the former, and I am sure it will be more to your advantage. Revenge is a froward passion, and the vice of an ungoverned, or an uncultivated mind: But a desire, and an attempt to redress grievances, is a manly virtue, and the characteristic of an Englishman, since to this desire and attempt you owe every privilege you enjoy.

Change then your petitions for inquiries, which, as things are now circumstanced will end in nothing, into petitions for a general militia bill, and for annual parliaments. Whether millions have been lavished, or hoarded, the inquiries you are so zealous for will leave the public equally defrauded of both. The terrors indeed of these inquiries, which it may be you did not intend, may accelerate the passing of these two bills so essential to your security and liberty. But then you must make the passing of these a condition

for waving all inquiries into former mismanagements: By this means you will give an opportunity to the innocent of proving their innocence: and to the guilty of attoning for their guilt.

These are the measures recommended to you by one; who is embarked in the same vessel with yourselves; who derives his only hopes of liberty from annual parliaments, and his only hopes of security from a general militia. But, in pursuing these measures, I must also recommend to you to trust to yourselves alone: Your leaders have often sacrificed your interest, and the most solemn promises, made and reiterated to secure your liberty, for places, pensions, dignities, and even the low, the dirty consideration of a present pecuniary advantage: These are the patriots you generously trusted; and these are the patriots, who shamefully betrayed you. Macbeth murdered

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murdered sleep, and woe be to those, who murdered confidence: But this woe has long since overtaken them; and, from being the idols of the people, they are, like other idols when the fraud is discovered, become their scorn.

Instead therefore of trusting to discarded placemen, transformed by resentment into patriots, trust to yourselves. And why should you not? The interest they had gained in you was powerful enough to raise them to the dignities they have disgraced; and shall not your own interest be powerful enough to obtain that liberty and security for yourselves which you will never abuse? Even your former disappointments shewed your power; and, if you concur in pursuing the measures I recommend to you, your success will confirm it.

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If the least spark of revenge still glows in the minds of any of you, which I should wonder at, since brave men are not revengeful, remember the great examples of the Athenians, and Romans: The former, having suffered all sorts of oppressions from their thirty tyrants supported by their enemies the Lacedæmonians, after great struggles, redeemed themselves, and restored liberty to their country; and, by an ever memorable decree, granted an amnesty to all who had opposed, or betrayed that liberty. And, after the death of Cæsar, Cicero justly values himself for having renewed this example of the Athenians; and for having introduced a law for a general amnesty to all who had been concerned in the late contests for domination, or liberty.

There is something so noble in these examples, that every man must applaud the authors who gave such excellent

lent lessons of humanity to all succeeding ages: While a reformation laid in blood, in confiscations, or other punishments, serves only to perpetuate the animosity of one part of a nation against the other, and to intail upon families the desire of a retaliation, whenever they have an opportunity to exert it. How much more does it become the generosity and spirit of Englishmen to pursue the obtaining these two constitutional acts by constitutional means, which, if vigorously applied, will surely obtain them; and to accept an acquiescence in those acts, as an atonement for all you have suffered, and all you have feared: Much have you suffered no doubt, and more have you justly feared; but the obtaining these two acts will provide against the return of your sufferings and fears more effectually than the punishment, how great soever, of all the guilty.

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Humanity therefore and your interest here coincide, which they always will do notwithstanding the low arts of trifling politicians to set them at variance; and both join their force to induce you to aim invariably at these two points, annual parliaments, and a general militia; without suffering yourselves to be deluded either by your desire of revenge, chimerical in its view, and unjustifiable in its end; by promises often forfeited; by delays now as dangerous as refusals; or by any other arts of men sinking under a burden, and unwilling to resign it, to abandon your last hopes of preserving your liberty, and independence.

Every English reader of the English history must have observed with concern, the many struggles which our liberty has undergone, from the great interruption it met with at the Norman conquest, through the various attempts  
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formed against it by our ambitious kings, but chiefly by the weakest, till it settled upon its own basis, the mutual confidence of the prince and people in the reign of our glorious queen Elizabeth : But this confidence was soon dissolved by her successor, who transmitted to his son, and grandsons an uniform design to enslave their people, with as uniform an inability to effect it. The last of these pursued the same hereditary design with more violence and less parts, than either of his ancestors : and, by adding bigotry to despotism, improved the weakness of his family. By a scheme calculated to divide the spoils of our liberty between tyranny, which our ancestors had long resisted, and popery, which they had long despised, he forced them into this alternative, either to be slaves, or to dethrone the author of their slavery. They wisely chose the last ; and, by expelling a prince unworthy to reign, they renewed, not established, this useful

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maxim, that, in limited monarchies, all power is derived from those, for whose benefit alone all power is instituted, the people.

In consequence of this maxim they gave what they had a right to give, the crown to king William; and, in consequence of the same maxim, they settled that dignity upon the present royal family. Under the sanction of this right, the best of all others, his majesty's royal father, and his present majesty have enjoyed their well deserved dignities, without ever deviating, in one single instance, from the contract with their people from whom they derived them. And let no one suppose the contract I mention, between an English king and his subjects, to be an imaginary thing: Since one reason, and a strong one too, given by both houses of parliament for the deposition of king James the second, was, *that he had broken*



*broken the original contract between king and people.*

From this short survey of the history of your country, you will be conscious of your own rights; and observe that the weakest of your princes always opposed, and the wisest always supported your liberties. It is the most glorious, and now almost the singular prerogative of a king of England to reign over a free people. The power of a king of slaves, is, and can only be, supported by force; but That of a king of freemen, is, and can only be, supported by choice: The freer therefore the subjects of the latter are, the more glorious will be their sovereign: And what can contribute so much to the freedom of the people of this nation, and consequently to the glory of their sovereign, as annual parliaments? And what can contribute so effectually to the security of both, as a general militia?

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If these two beneficial, I may say necessary, acts are passed in the present reign, the glory and honor of both will be justly ascribed by posterity to his majesty. The advisers of these salutary measures, and, among the first the author of this pamphlet, will be buried in oblivion; nay the names of the ministers who promoted them, if any will promote them, and Those of the members of both houses who spoke, and voted in so noble a cause will be forgotten by posterity, who will reserve all their gratitude for the amiable prince, in whose reign, and by whose concurrence, they were passed: Just as the sole tribute of thanks is paid by the English history to Edward the third for the two acts passed by him for confirming the glorious privilege of annual parliaments to his people.

Every reign in our history confirms what I have said, that our weakest and

most pusillanimous princes were enemies to the liberties of their subjects, and the wisest and bravest the patrons of it. The father and grandson of Edward the third are striking examples of the former; and the conduct of the last mentioned prince is no less a shining instance of the latter. The victory obtained by this great prince over the French at Cressy; the victory obtained by his son over the same enemy at Poitiers, where he took their king prisoner, were indeed glaring achievements; but, like the bonfires, that where light up to celebrate those victories, they produced a blaze, and left behind them no other remains, than reputation: Whereas the act *de prodicionibus*, by which all treasons, before indefinite, were ascertained; and the two acts for annual parliaments, with many more of the like tendency, all passed in this king's reign, were permanent benefits to his people, and deserve not only the gratitude, and applause, but



but the imitation of all their descendants.

The honor therefore of your sovereign, of which I am persuaded you are as jealous as of your own; the dignity and freedom of parliaments; the preservation of your liberty, in defence of which so many thousands of your ancestors lost their lives; and the security of this island, all call upon you to exert yourselves at this important juncture, and to obtain annual parliaments, and a general militia, as the only means now left, both to secure these blessings to yourselves, and transmit them to your posterity.



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